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ABSTRACT

A growing body of literature has found that between women and men as leaders there are important differences in leadership styles, qualities, and priorities. Yet there are few studies that empirically examine the gender differences from a subordinate perspective, particularly in higher education. It is important to identify those factors that best contribute to the leadership effectiveness of both female and male leaders as perceived by their unit participants. This paper reports on a study that examined the differences in the way female and male deans lead their academic units as perceived by their faculty and administrative staff. Surveys were mailed to all 1950 faculty/staff members reporting to 22 deans at a major research university. The survey consisted of items measuring seven leadership domains of responsibility based on the professional literature on deans and a review of existing evaluation instruments. Results indicated that the combination of deans' leadership dimensions and respondents' demographic characteristics contributed significantly to the group classification of male and female deans. Of the demographic variables, sex and minority status of the respondents and holding the rank of full professor discriminate faculty and staff perceptions of effective leadership. Among the leadership dimensions, findings suggested that faculty members and administrative staff perceived that women and men reflect differing patterns in their role as leaders. Female deans were perceived to be more likely than male deans to enhance the quality of education in their units, engage in research, community, and professional endeavors, promote and support institutional diversity within their units, and manage personnel and financial resources fairly and effectively. Contains 3 tables and 37 references. (BT)

Women and Their Effectiveness as Leaders: What Makes the Difference Among Deans?

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Women and Their Effectiveness as Leaders: What Makes the Difference Among Deans?

The widespread notion that women and men differ as leaders has been built more on anecdote than empirical research. There is however, a growing body of literature that has found that there are important differences in the leadership styles, qualities, and priorities that exist between women and men as leaders (Astin and Leland, 1991; Cantor and Bernay, 1992; Helgesen, 1990; Kezar, 2000; Roesner, 1990). There are also a number of studies that contend women do not function as leaders in the same way men do and that they behave differently in similar situations (Billing and Alvesson, 1994; Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky, 1992; Statham, 1987). These studies discuss at length the similarities and differences between female and male managers, their leadership styles, and different job reactions.

Despite the emerging literature on women and leadership, there are few studies that empirically examine the gender differences from a subordinate perspective, particularly in higher education. Much of the literature on leadership primarily consists of self-report evaluations and assessments that describe the leader's own performance, leadership style, and effectiveness. Although subordinates' evaluations are perceptual and may well be subject to bias, learning the perceptions of those who work with and for leaders is vital to understanding their effectiveness. In addition to these self-assessments, the majority of leadership studies tend to focus on a few senior-level positions such as presidents, provosts, and chief academic affairs officers (e.g., Birnbaum, 1989; Bensimon, Neuman, and Birnbaum, 1989; Bowen and Shapiro, 1998; Martin and Samels, 1997). Few studies exist that specifically examine midlevel academic leadership through the assessment of subordinate evaluations. Thus, it is important to identify those factors that best contribute to the leadership effectiveness of both female and male leaders as perceived

by their unit participants. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the differences in the way female and male dean's lead their academic units as perceived by their faculty and administrative staff.

Differences in Leadership by Gender

The recent literature on women's leadership describes, in some cases, a very different image of leadership than the traditional image of male leadership. For example, Helgesen (1995) discusses at length the ways in which men and women lead. She found many patterns of similarity and dissimilarity between men and women leaders. Men characterized their days by interruption, discontinuity, and fragmentation. In contrast, women did not view unscheduled tasks and encounters as interruptions. Women made time for activities not directly related to their work, but their emphasis was to keep relationships in the organization in good repair. Men spared little time for activities not related to their work. Women scheduled time for sharing organizational information; men, on the other hand, had difficulty sharing information. Women saw their own identities as complex and multifaceted; men identified themselves with their jobs and position. Both men and women preferred personal encounters with individuals and maintained a complex network of relationships with people outside their organizations.

In another study, Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky (1992) looked at the evaluation of leaders by gender. They found that the empirical literature addressing the issue of whether women are devalued in leadership roles is substantial although divergent. Their findings indicated that women leaders, regardless of the organization or occupation, were evaluated more negatively than men when exhibiting autocratic behavior. They found a tendency for female leaders to be

especially devalued when they direct male subordinates. Their research suggests those traditional masculine leadership styles (e.g., autocratic, directive) are seen as more favorable for male leaders, and collaborative and collegial work environments are seen as more favorable through women's participative leadership styles. Eagly et al. (1992) suggest that the reason for these perceptual differences on leader effectiveness may be the result of traditional management practices and rigid forms of bureaucratic organizations. That is, an attitudinal bias may take the form of disapproval directed specifically toward women, which would be particularly disruptive to traditional patterns of gender deference (Eagly et al., 1992).

Bayes (1987) investigated whether women in high ranking positions behave differently from men. She carried out in-depth interviews of American women and men who were at the highest income level of the federal government, the Health and Human Services Department and the Treasury Department. The investigations suggest that the expectation that women and men have different attitudes toward leadership style and behave differently in similar situations was not supported by the data. In her study, the only point upon which male and female respondents agreed was that women were different from men in the area of their dedication to work. Women were perceived to work harder, to take their work more seriously, or even too seriously, and to be less concerned with monetary rewards than with recognition when a job was done well.

Examining the perceived differences in leadership by gender is also an important issue to investigate in higher education. As women continue to be underrepresented, it is important to understand how their leadership is perceived. Although there is relatively little known empirically about the quality of leadership in higher education, there is a good deal of attention paid to the quality of worklife experienced by faculty and staff (e.g., Deats and Lenker, 1994; Johnsrud and

Sadao, 1999; Sagaria, 1985). In her book, *Shattering the Myths: Women in Academe*, Glazer-Raymo (1999) points out that when gender becomes part of the equation, leadership seems to take on a different meaning. She contends that women have no equivalent for the discredited "great man" theory of leadership. Glazer-Raymo states that although significant advances have been made since 1970 to enlarge women's representation in the academy, institutional leaders are still reluctant to acknowledge the tenacity of policies that deter women's full participation (p.ix). She also contends that although limited, women provide most of the empirical research on women administrators in academic organizations (e.g., Astin and Leland, 1991; Johnsrud and Heck, 1994; Sagaria, 1988).

Astin and Leland (1991) provide in-depth descriptive accounts of women leaders within the context of education. They gathered the personal recollections and stories of 77 women in leadership positions from colleges and universities, foundations, and other educational organizations and public service agencies. The work of Astin and Leland examined the social and historical context of women in leadership, their formative influences (e.g., family, mentors, role models), the forces that shaped their commitment to social justice and involvement in leadership activities, and their contribution and establishment of educational initiatives within the academic community (e.g., publications and journals, legislation and national policy). In their work, they found that these women provided a significant illustration of [demonstrated] leadership that is nonhierarchical and collective. These women were most effective by leading their units and organizations through empowering others and enabling groups to take action. Moreover, these women describe important elements to their leadership effectiveness as: networks (e.g., organization, community), collective action (e.g., collaborative interaction), and the capacity for

self-analysis (e.g., critical reflection).

More recently, Rosser, Johnsrud, and Heck (2000) examined the leadership of deans and directors at a major public Research I university. An instrument was developed to evaluate seven domains of the dean's role through 52 items that reflect important tasks, duties, and responsibilities. Almost 900 full-time faculty and staff rated the effectiveness of 22 deans and directors. They found that when controlling for sex and race/ethnicity of the respondent, faculty and administrative staff members perceived that as a group, female deans were more effective leaders than their male counterparts. Moreover, the seven leadership domains contributed significantly to the definition and measurement of deans' leadership effectiveness both at the within- (individual) and between- (group) unit levels in the academic organization. That is, the perceptions of leadership effectiveness exhibit an individual, as well as a "collective" or group similarity in assessing deans' leadership.

The literature and research on leadership continue to produce ambiguous and conflicting results regarding the relationship between gender and leadership. Both gender and leadership are complicated social phenomenon that have been constructed and reconstructed through history. Thus, by adding gender to the study of leadership, particularly in higher education, researchers provide an opportunity to capture the full range of characteristics that comprise effective leadership in complex organizations. Effective leadership is critical to the future of higher education, and yet our ability to assess the effectiveness of leaders through college and university participants (e.g., faculty, staff, students) within academic organizations is not well-developed. This research will build on the previous work of Rosser, et al (2000) by investigating the combination of leadership and demographic characteristics that account for the differences in the

way faculty members and administrative staff perceive the effectiveness of female and male leaders, in this case, academic deans.

Conceptual Framework

Numerous theories and lenses have been developed and used to explain the differences in status between men and women within organizations. Many writers have pointed out the multitude of theories which exist in the field of research on the situation of women. These theories range from the *macro*-sociological explanatory models to the *meso* (middle) range and *micro*-sociological explanatory models. *Macro*-sociological models at a very abstract and general level provide explanations of the different positions of women and men in the division of labor (e.g., Marxism, patriarchy, dual systems). *Meso* range and *micro*-sociological explanatory models tend to be at a more concrete social level, and they consider the social constitution of the differentiation and inequality between the sexes (Billing and Alvesson, 1994). These models are concerned with the importance of social structures, gender roles, and organizational cultures. Conceptually, this paper will be primarily concerned with those frameworks that seek to explain differences between women and men as leaders within academic organizations (i.e., organizational structures, cultural assumptions, gender roles).

Structural explanations pinpoint systemic disparity as the root cause of differential treatment rather than actions or characteristics of individuals (Morrison and Von Glinow, 1997). Such theories suggest that institutional policies and practices in the social system perpetuate these differences. For example, Kanter (1977) argues that the placement of women in the social structure is explained by the opportunity structures and concrete circumstances of women and men respectively. Production of gender differences is thus perceived as a direct reflection of the

actual situation of men and women in the labor market rather than the result of an abstract and general social influence. This suggests that the opportunity structure is closely related to the division of labor according to sex. Kanter (1977) maintains that the opportunity structure is critical to the expectations (e.g., leadership, promotion) of women and of men. Therefore, the opportunity structure or the structural conditions within an organization contribute to shaping behavior such that it may ultimately influence sex distribution, or that it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, women look at the structure of opportunities and expect that they are less likely to be promoted or placed in leadership positions, and the reverse would be true for men. Kanter believes that the findings regarding sexual differences in work behavior (i.e., men are more ambitious, goal oriented and engaged in their work) and that women are more concerned with the work relations, should be reexamined. Thus, the concrete, actual life situation and the possibilities and limitations that the organizational structure implies are important.

A number of studies have been inspired by a cultural framework in studying the different aspects and meaning of gender and organizational culture (e.g., Calas and Smircich, 1991; Mills, 1988; Mumby and Stohl, 1991; Symons, 1986). Cultural theories are described by Billing and Alvesson (1994) as pointing collectively at shared patterns of meanings, values, assumptions and expectations that guide perceptions, cognitions and emotions. They believe that culture creates and guides a collective, subjective logic which forms the unspoken, often unconscious subtext of social life. These cultural assumptions and values are seen as meaningful in the understanding of how gender is socially constructed and reconstructed within organizations. Even within these studies there are many different schools and orientations within anthropology, ethnology, sociology and organization studies which express different views on culture (e.g., Alvesson and

Berg, 1992; Keesing, 1974; Smircich, 1983). Although many of these frameworks go well beyond the scope and purpose of this paper, one would be remiss to ignore their contribution to the research on gender and organizations.

Billing and Alvesson (1994) describe role theories as frameworks that are concerned with the differences between sexes as expressed through different expectation and behavioral patterns and possibly psychological characteristics. In this case, a role is the behavior we expect of a person in a specific position as a male or female. Role theories have some similarities with culture theory because they both draw attention to expectations and norms (Billing and Alvesson, 1994). Roles are normative, and it is a question of expectations regarding an "ideal" behavioral pattern. For example, Billing and Alvesson argue that these social expectations and patterns can be perpetuated through textbooks, various types of media, and also by family, friends and colleagues. On the other hand, expectations may differ and give rise to role conflicts as well. Although role theory does not attend to issues of power and social interests, it does offer possible avenues to investigate various role expectations in the way women and men lead their organizations, such as in this case, the perceived differences in the leadership of female and male deans. From this perspective, role theory allows us to discriminate between the perceived norms and behaviors of men and women and what actually exists. When these differences are explained empirically, the potential for organizational reform, or in this case, the reform of gender role expectations, becomes more accessible. The aim of this research is to draw more generally from those frameworks (i.e., organizational structure, gender roles) that attempt to explain the inequity of gender construction and examine specifically the perceived differences in the leadership of female and male deans.

Procedures

Sample. Faculty and staff were asked to evaluate the performance of their deans based on several dimensions of their leadership role. In an effort to determine each dean's overall effectiveness, surveys were mailed to all 1,950 faculty members (i.e., instructors, researchers, specialists, librarians) and staff members (i.e., executive/managerial staff, administrative, professional and technical staff, clerical/secretarial employees) at a major public research university reporting to 22 deans. The deans' units consisted of various colleges, schools, and programs within the areas of arts and sciences, professional schools, organized research groups, and service and support areas. Three mailings yielded 865 usable responses from deans' faculty and administrative staff (a 54 percent return rate). The faculty and administrative staff respondents in this study proportionately represented the demographic populations of the institution (University Faculty and Staff Report, Fall 1999).

Of the respondents, 405 (47.3 percent) were female and 451 (52.7 percent) were male. Their position categories consisted of 68 (7.9 percent) instructors, 116 (13.4 percent) assistant professors, 128 (14.8 percent) associate professors, 243 (28.1 percent) full professors, 15 (1.7 percent) managerial/executives, 150 (17.3 percent) administrative, professional, and technical staff, and 89 (10.3 percent) clerical/secretarial or civil service employees. Three hundred and eighty-three (44.3 percent) faculty and staff were classified as minority (African-American, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Native American, Pacific Islander, and mixed/other) and 456 (52.7 percent) were classified as non-minority (Caucasian). It should be noted that the number of minority faculty and staff, and deans/directors (i.e., roughly 30-40 percent) are considerably higher than in most other research institutions.

The academic deans and directors evaluated consisted of 16 males and 6 females. Additionally, six of the deans and directors were minority males, and two were minority females. Overall, therefore, 36 percent of the deans were members of minority groups and 27 percent of the deans in this study were female. The deans managed units of varying sizes and academic types (e.g., units within arts and sciences, professional schools, organized research groups, and service and support units). In a few cases, support units were run by directors. Only those directors who held positions equivalent to deans and who reported directly to vice-presidents were included in this sample.

Instrumentation and Variables. The instrument was designed to gather information about deans' effectiveness in fulfilling their leadership roles and responsibilities. The survey consists of items measuring seven leadership domains of responsibility based on the professional literature on deans and a review of existing evaluation instruments. The seven leadership domains were defined by 58 Likert-type items (5-point scales). A response of "1" indicated the respondent had an unsatisfactory perception of the dean's performance on that item, and a response of "5" indicated an outstanding level of performance. In addition to the scaled leadership items, demographic characteristics (e.g., sex, race/ethnicity, tenure status) of the respondents were also collected.

A confirmatory factor analysis (not reported here) was conducted to identify the underlying structure in the data by reducing a larger set of items from the questionnaire to a smaller set of factors. Each leadership domain, therefore, was defined by a series of items. All leadership domains were judged to be highly reliable, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients (i.e., a measure of internal consistency) above .9. Seven leadership dimensions or constructs were confirmed to provide reliable measures for further analysis: vision and goal setting, management

of the unit, support for institutional diversity, interpersonal relationships, the quality of education in the unit, communication skills, and research and community/professional endeavors. After defining the variables through confirmatory factor analysis, a discriminant analysis was performed to determine which of the leadership dimensions best distinguish female and male deans.

Results

Discriminant Analysis. The purpose of discriminant analysis is to find a linear combination of variables that maximizes the differences between groups, in this case, to find a minimum number of variables needed to differentiate the effective leadership of female and male deans. The direct method of discriminant analysis was used, and all leadership dimensions and demographics were entered into the analysis simultaneously. Through preliminary analysis, several nonsignificant demographic characteristics (predictors) were dropped from the study (e.g., department chair, years worked with the dean, tenure status, organizational role: faculty or staff).

Evaluation of the homogeneity of the variance-covariance matrices between groups (using Box's M test) indicated no threat to the multivariate analysis. The priori classification was examined first to examine the underlying structure of the data. One discriminant function was calculated with chi square (10df)=100.14 ($p<.000$). The canonical correlation of .41 indicated the discriminant function provided a moderate (and acceptable) degree of association. The group centroids (means) of -.30 and .68 suggest that the discriminant function separates the leadership effectiveness of female and male deans.

Once faculty and staff members of the two dean groups are classified, descriptive data of each dean can be examined. As shown in table 1, means and standard deviations are provided for

the two groups of deans to aid in understanding the coefficients. In this case study, faculty and staff rated female deans higher on all seven leadership dimensions. Female deans were rated most effective in the dimensions of communication skills ($\bar{x}=4.22$), research, community, professional endeavors ($\bar{x}=4.15$), interpersonal relations ($\bar{x}=4.07$), and the management of the unit ($\bar{x}=4.06$) than male deans ($\bar{x}=3.99$, $\bar{x}=3.78$, $\bar{x}=3.87$, $\bar{x}=3.74$, respectively).

The strength of the structure coefficients can also be examined. Structure coefficients (Table 2) indicate the correlation between each variable and the discriminant function in classifying these deans after controlling for the effects of the other predictors. The positive and negative coefficients can be useful in determining how the variables discriminate between male and female deans. Positive coefficients on the variables indicate that faculty and staff perceive that male deans are less effective in these domains and have lower means (as noted in table 1). One can see that the quality of education in the unit (.68), research, community, and professional endeavors (.50), and support for institutional diversity (.47), and management of the unit (.35) are dominant leadership dimensions that clearly discriminate female deans from male deans. Sex of the respondent (.36), a demographic characteristic, also contributes moderately to the classification of female and male deans. Further, negative coefficients suggest that those faculty and staff are more likely to be a full professor (-.21) and a minority (-.20).

Using the linear discriminant function, group membership may also be predicted. The percent correct versus incorrect measures the accuracy of the discriminant function to classify the administrators in two groups (female and male deans). The model correctly classifies 74 percent of the sample of faculty and staff (against 50 percent by chance). As table 3 suggests, the model has better accuracy in predicting the effective leadership of male deans than that of female deans.

Discussion and Implications

The results indicate that the combination of deans' leadership dimensions and demographic characteristics of the respondents contribute significantly to the group classification of male and female deans. Of the demographic variables, sex and minority status of the respondent and holding the rank of full professor discriminate faculty and staff perceptions of effective leadership that exists between female and male deans. Although these variables contribute to the group prediction of these deans, the limitation in this analysis is that we are not able to determine to what extent these perceptions are positive or negative. What we do know is that more female respondents rated female deans, and more full professors and minority respondents rated male deans. This does raise the concern that with more females rating female deans the results could be skewed toward female deans. Further analysis (not reported here), however, indicated that when controlling for sex and race of the respondent, there were no differences by sex or race in the way these faculty members and administrative staff perceived the effectiveness of their deans (See Rosser et al., 2000).

Moreover, any effort to eliminate these demographic characteristics from the analysis affects the classification of deans by group. Therefore, retaining the variables in the analysis indicates that faculty members and staff do perceive differences in the effective leadership of their deans. Other demographics, however, such as years worked in the position, tenure status, department chair, type of administrative position, and whether the respondents were from the faculty or administrative staff, do not explain the differences in deans' effective leadership and were dropped from the final analysis.

Among the leadership dimensions, this study suggests that faculty members and

administrative staff evaluating the effectiveness of their deans perceive that women and men reflect differing patterns in their role as leaders. More specifically, female deans are perceived to be more likely than their male colleagues to: enhance the quality of education in their units; engage in research, community, and professional endeavors; promote and support institutional diversity within their units; and manage personnel and financial resources fairly and effectively. These four dimensions of effective leadership contribute significantly to the way faculty members and staff discriminate between female and male deans. Although less dominant in the group prediction of deans by sex, communication skills, vision and goal setting, and interpersonal relations were also significant indicators that differentiate female from male deans.

Despite the recent literature that describes differences in the way females and males lead their organizations (Billing and Alvesson, 1994; Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky, 1992; Kezar, 2000; Powell, 1988; Statham, 1987), the results from this study provide mixed support. Mixed in the sense that not just some dimensions (e.g., interpersonal skills, communication) of leadership are enacted better by women, but rather these results suggest that all the leadership dimensions are more effectively practiced by women deans. They are perceived to be, in this case, more effective leaders. The strong overall performance of female deans provides empirical evidence that women are far more reaching in their leadership abilities than previously portrayed. Once perceived to be primarily skilled in the areas of collaboration (e.g., participation, relational) and interpersonal skills, these results indicate that women deans are also perceived as effective leaders in quality and diversity issues within the unit, research and community endeavors, vision and goal setting, as well as the fair allocation of financial and human resources (overall management) to the unit. While the Rosser, et al. (2000) study indicated that female deans were rated higher in their

leadership roles, and thus perceived to be more effective leaders, this study builds on their work by examining more closely what dimensions of deans' leadership account for the perceived differences in effectiveness between female and male deans. The answer is not which dimensions, but rather to what extent do women exceed their male counterparts in all dimensions of effective leadership.

These results indicate that the combination of deans' leadership dimensions and demographic characteristics of the respondents contribute significantly to the group classification of female and male deans. These findings support previous research in that the consequences of structural conditions and the reproduction of these conditions continue to exist within organizations (Kanter, 1977). While the structural approach draws attention to organizational patterns, culture pays attention to the level of meaning in the way women and men are perceived to lead (Calas and Smircich, 1992; Mumby and Stohl, 1991). Furthermore, leadership may also be characterized by the gendered role associated with being either a female or male (Billing and Alvesson, 1994). This study suggests that the embedded assumptions of structure, culture, and gender role may contribute to faculty and staff perceptions of their dean's effective leadership.

Although twice as many women (79 percent) than men (45 percent) have aspired to the [Arts and Sciences] deanship (Kilson, 1996), the position remains largely male dominated. Further, Glazer-Raymo (1999) points out that the placement of women in leadership positions within the structure of academic organizations is critical. She contends that the deanship affords incumbents a privileged position for gaining visibility and recognition en route to senior administrative positions, and therefore, the selection of women as deans is important to the structure of promotional opportunity. As long as women comprise 25 percent (27 percent in this

study) of the 5,004 [sampled] deans in colleges and universities (CUPA, 1997), the conditions of structural opportunity (promotion and status) for women in leadership positions remain elusive.

The recruitment potential among women thus appears lower than among men for leading positions such as the deanship. The structure of equal opportunity may only be a "small veneer of women's equity" in higher education (Glazer-Raymo, 1999). The consequences of structural conditions (e.g., opportunity structure, composition of the sexes) and the reproduction of these conditions, are explained in part, but the structural conditions that continue to exist are not. Moreover, the structural approach does not explain why women find themselves in jobs with few possibilities of promotion more often than men do, however, it does maintain that structural and situational conditions are decisive for the behavior of a person (Billing and Alvesson, 1994). The results from this study provide empirical evidence that women are perceived as effective in all aspects of their role as leaders. This finding should reinforce the structural opportunities for the promotion and production of academic women into mid- and senior-level leadership positions.

Cultural assumptions in the way men and women are perceived to lead their units and organizations continue to be powerful barriers in the study of effective leadership. These cultural assumptions may ultimately affect the study of leadership or rather, the opportunity for women to move into or obtain leadership positions. Understanding the cultural differences enhances work relationships, effectiveness, and the ability to reach organizational goals (Cox, 1993). The goal in this study was to provide empirical evidence that will test those cultural assumptions that continue to categorize leaders only by their sex rather than by their effectiveness as leaders within organizations. Studies such as these emphasize that women do indeed possess a broad range of qualities that represent an effective leader. While the style of the leader to accomplish the goals

and mission of the organization may differ (Astin and Leland, 1991), the effectiveness of their overall leadership behavior may not. Leadership is a social interaction, and similar to all social interactions, perception and interpretation are critical to understanding the leadership process (Martinko and Gardner, 1987). Subordinate reports in this case are a measure or snapshot of that social perception. The goal here is to provide a broader understanding of those perceptions of effective leadership in organizations.

The perceived role expectations between women and men (social norms and behaviors) are characterized by their differences in leadership. The finding in this case study provides empirical evidence that, in part, explains the perceived differences in effectiveness by sex. The results in this case study indicate that female deans were rated as more effective leaders in every dimension of effective leadership. Therefore, the speculation and myths about women rating supervisors more favorably than men, or women tending to rate women tougher, are not supported in this study. Similarly, the commonly held view that men rate their supervisors and, specifically, women more critically, is not supported. Contrary to previous research on women and leadership (Bayes, 1987; Billing & Alvesson, 1994; Eagly et al., 1992; Helgeson, 1995; Statham, 1987), these findings call into question the extent to which social constructions of leadership are gendered. While women and men often bring different leadership qualities, priorities, and methods of conceptualizing issues to their professional roles, their effectiveness as leaders to achieve these goals may not be so different. Therefore, it is important not to overstate perceived differences that may exist between gender and leadership.

Conclusion

Deans serve a critical role in the academic organization. They have the ability to control information, accumulate and allocate resources, and assess the performance and productivity of their faculty and staff (Rosser et al., 2000). The finding in this study that female deans are more positively perceived as effective leaders in all dimensions of deans' leadership adds to the empirical literature on women in higher education. This finding also parallels previous research conducted on the effectiveness of school principals--suggesting that female principals were rated as more effective leaders than their male counterparts (Heck, 1995). Further research is suggested in this area--researchers should strive to empirically define and measure those dimensions that continually make a difference (or not to make a difference) in the way women, as well as men, lead their academic units.

Leadership, with its multiple theoretical approaches and applications, remains a powerful phenomenon, and our understanding of leadership within the complexities of social organizations continues to evolve. Most of the theoretical work to date suggests that effective leadership is best conceived as a multidimensional concept. It is important, therefore, to study how both men and women, through their social interactions and behaviors, influence individuals within the social systems they oversee. Throughout this study, a primary concern has been to further our understanding of how faculty and staff perceive the behaviors and processes of their deans. In pursuit of effectiveness, the academic leader needs to attend to the perceptions that individuals form regarding their performance.

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations of Variables
N=865

Variables	Group 1- Male Deans N=16		Group 2- Female Deans N=6	
	Means	SD	Means	SD
Vision and goal setting	3.77	1.06	4.02	.93
Management of the unit	3.74	.99	4.06	.83
Interpersonal relations	3.87	.96	4.07	.91
Quality of education	3.23	.44	3.50	.36
Research/community/professional endeavors	3.78	.82	4.15	.59
Communication skills	3.99	.90	4.22	.66
Support for institutional diversity	2.71	.28	2.83	.24
Sex of respondent (Females=1)	.29	.45	.46*	.50
Minority status (Minorities=1)	.34*	.47	.30	.46
Full professors (Fulls=1)	.47*	.50	.37	.48

*These means indicate that more women rated women deans and more minorities and full professors rated male deans.

Table 2

Predictors of the Effective Leadership Between Female and Male Deans

Leadership Dimensions	Structure Coefficients*
Quality of education	.68
Research/community/professional endeavors	.50
Support for institutional diversity	.47
Management of the unit	.35
Communication skills	.28
Vision and goal setting	.24
Interpersonal relations	.22
Demographic Variables	
Sex of the respondent	.36
Full professors	-.22*
Minority status	-.09*

* The negative coefficients indicate that more minorities and full professors rated male deans.

+ Much of the literature on discriminant analysis suggests that the structure coefficients (rather than standardized coefficients) are better for interpretation (See Huberty, 1994; Marcoulides, 1997 for further explanations).

Table 3

Faculty and Staff Correctly Classified by Female and Male Deans
by Variables in the Model

Predicted Group Membership n=542*		
Actual Group	Male Deans	Female Deans
Male Deans	306 (81.6%)	69 (18.4%)
Female Deans	74 (44.3%)	93 (55.7%)
Correctly Classified = 74%		

* The analysis retains only those cases in which respondents provided data for all relevant variables.

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